



US011229228B2

(12) **United States Patent**
Markosyan

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 11,229,228 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent:** ***Jan. 25, 2022**

(54) **GLUCOSYL STEVIA COMPOSITION**

(71) Applicant: **PureCircle Sdn Bhd**, Kuala Lumpur (MY)

(72) Inventor: **Avetik Markosyan**, Yerevan (AM)

(73) Assignee: **PureCircle Sdn Bhd**, Kuala Lumpur (MY)

(*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 246 days.

This patent is subject to a terminal disclaimer.

(21) Appl. No.: **16/255,614**

(22) Filed: **Jan. 23, 2019**

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

US 2019/0150493 A1 May 23, 2019

Related U.S. Application Data

(60) Division of application No. 15/646,629, filed on Jul. 11, 2017, now abandoned, which is a continuation of application No. 14/616,010, filed on Feb. 6, 2015, now Pat. No. 9,706,792, which is a continuation of application No. 14/073,423, filed on Nov. 6, 2013, now Pat. No. 8,993,269, which is a continuation of application No. 13/567,707, filed on Aug. 6, 2012, now Pat. No. 8,647,844, which is a division of application No. 13/029,263, filed on Feb. 17, 2011, now Pat. No. 8,257,948.

(51) **Int. Cl.**

A23L 27/30 (2016.01)
C12P 19/56 (2006.01)
C12P 19/18 (2006.01)
A23L 2/60 (2006.01)
A61K 36/28 (2006.01)
A61K 8/60 (2006.01)
A61Q 19/00 (2006.01)
A21D 2/18 (2006.01)
A21D 2/36 (2006.01)
C12P 33/00 (2006.01)
A23C 9/13 (2006.01)
A61K 8/9789 (2017.01)
A61K 8/9794 (2017.01)
A61Q 11/00 (2006.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**

CPC **A23L 27/36** (2016.08); **A21D 2/18** (2013.01); **A21D 2/36** (2013.01); **A23C 9/1307** (2013.01); **A23L 2/60** (2013.01); **A23L 27/33** (2016.08); **A61K 8/602** (2013.01); **A61K 8/9789** (2017.08); **A61K 8/9794** (2017.08); **A61K 36/28** (2013.01); **A61Q 11/00** (2013.01); **A61Q 19/00** (2013.01); **C12P 19/18** (2013.01); **C12P 19/56** (2013.01); **C12P 33/00** (2013.01); **A23V 2002/00** (2013.01); **A61K 2800/10** (2013.01); **A61K 2800/805** (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**

CPC **A23L 1/236**; **A23L 1/2365**; **A23L 1/2363**; **C12P 7/02**; **C12P 7/62**; **C12P 19/56**

See application file for complete search history.

(56) **References Cited**

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

3,723,410 A 3/1973 Persinos
4,082,858 A 4/1978 Morita
4,171,430 A 10/1979 Matsushita
4,219,571 A 8/1980 Miyake
4,361,697 A 11/1982 Dobberstein
4,454,290 A 6/1984 Dubois
4,590,160 A 5/1986 Nishihashi
4,599,403 A 7/1986 Kumar
4,612,942 A 9/1986 Dobberstein
4,657,638 A 4/1987 Le Grand
4,892,938 A 1/1990 Giovanetto
4,917,916 A 4/1990 Hirao
5,112,610 A 5/1992 Kienle
5,576,042 A 11/1996 Fuisz
5,756,714 A 5/1998 Antrim et al.
5,779,805 A 7/1998 Morano
5,962,678 A 10/1999 Payzant
5,972,120 A 10/1999 Kutowy
6,031,157 A 2/2000 Morita
6,080,561 A 6/2000 Morita
6,204,377 B1 3/2001 Nishimoto
6,228,996 B1 5/2001 Zhou
6,706,304 B1 3/2004 Ishida
7,807,206 B2 10/2010 Magomet

(Continued)

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

BR P10701736 7/2008
CN 1049666 3/1991

(Continued)

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Akimasa Nishida, "Reversibility of Acid-Inactivation of *Bacillus subtilis*' & 945;-Amylase" Agr. Biol. Chem., vol. 31, No. 6, 1967, pp. 682-693.

(Continued)

Primary Examiner — Robert J Yamasaki

Assistant Examiner — Charles Zoltan Constantine

(57) **ABSTRACT**

Glucosyl *stevia* compositions are prepared from steviol glycosides of *Stevia rebaudiana* Bertoni. The glucosylation was performed by cyclodextrin glucanotransferase using the starch as source of glucose residues. The short-chain glucosyl *stevia* compositions were purified to >95% content of total steviol glycosides. The compositions can be used as sweetness enhancers, flavor enhancers and sweeteners in foods, beverages, cosmetics and pharmaceuticals.

3 Claims, 3 Drawing Sheets

(56)

References Cited

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

7,838,011 B2 11/2010 Abelyan et al.
 7,838,044 B2 11/2010 Abelyan
 7,862,845 B2 1/2011 Magomet
 8,257,948 B1 9/2012 Markosyan
 8,318,459 B2 11/2012 Markosyan
 8,647,844 B2 2/2014 Markosyan
 8,669,077 B2 3/2014 Markosyan
 8,735,101 B2 5/2014 Markosyan
 2002/0132320 A1 9/2002 Wang et al.
 2003/0161876 A1 8/2003 Hansson
 2003/0236399 A1 12/2003 Zheng
 2006/0083838 A1 4/2006 Jackson
 2006/0134292 A1 6/2006 Abelyan
 2006/0142555 A1 6/2006 Jonnala
 2007/0082102 A1 4/2007 Magomet
 2007/0082103 A1 4/2007 Magomet
 2007/0116800 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116819 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116820 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116821 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116822 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116823 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116824 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116825 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116826 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116827 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116828 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116829 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116830 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116831 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116832 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116833 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116834 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116835 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116836 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116837 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116838 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116839 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116840 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0116841 A1 5/2007 Prakash
 2007/0128311 A1 6/2007 Prakash
 2007/0134390 A1 6/2007 Prakash
 2007/0134391 A1 6/2007 Prakash
 2007/0224321 A1 9/2007 Prakash
 2007/0292582 A1 12/2007 Prakash
 2008/0064063 A1 3/2008 Brandle
 2008/0102497 A1 5/2008 Wong
 2008/0107775 A1 5/2008 Prakash
 2008/0107776 A1 5/2008 Prakash
 2008/0107787 A1 5/2008 Prakash
 2008/0108710 A1 5/2008 Prakash
 2008/0111269 A1 5/2008 Politi
 2008/0226797 A1 9/2008 Lee
 2008/0292764 A1 11/2008 Prakash
 2008/0292765 A1 11/2008 Prakash
 2008/0292775 A1 11/2008 Prakash
 2008/0300402 A1 12/2008 Yang
 2009/0017185 A1 1/2009 Catani
 2009/0053378 A1 2/2009 Prakash
 2009/0074935 A1 3/2009 Lee
 2009/0079935 A1 3/2009 Harris
 2009/0142817 A1 6/2009 Norman
 2009/0226590 A1 9/2009 Fouache
 2010/0055752 A1 3/2010 Kumar
 2010/0056472 A1 3/2010 Duan
 2010/0099857 A1 4/2010 Evans
 2010/0057024 A1 5/2010 Cavallini et al.
 2010/0112155 A1 5/2010 Abelyan
 2010/0120710 A1 5/2010 Watanabe
 2010/0013756 A1 6/2010 Prakash et al.
 2010/0137569 A1 6/2010 Prakash
 2010/0189861 A1 7/2010 Abelyan
 2010/0227034 A1 9/2010 Purkayastha
 2010/0255171 A1 10/2010 Purkayastha
 2010/0278993 A1 11/2010 Prakash

2010/0316782 A1 12/2010 Shi
 2011/0030457 A1 2/2011 Valery
 2011/0033525 A1 2/2011 Lui
 2011/0092684 A1 4/2011 Abelyan
 2011/0104353 A1 5/2011 Lee
 2011/0111115 A1 5/2011 Shi
 2011/0124587 A1 5/2011 Jackson
 2011/0160311 A1 6/2011 Prakash
 2011/0189360 A1 8/2011 Yoo
 2011/0195169 A1 8/2011 Markosyan
 2012/0164678 A1 6/2012 Stephanopoulos
 2012/0214752 A1 8/2012 Markosyan

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

CN 1100727 3/1995
 CN 1112565 11/1995
 CN 1192447 9/1998
 CN 1238341 5/2002
 CN 1349997 5/2002
 CN 101200480 6/2008
 JP 52005800 1/1977
 JP 52083731 7/1977
 JP 52100500 8/1977
 JP 52136200 11/1977
 JP 54030199 3/1979
 JP 54132599 10/1979
 JP 55039731 3/1980
 JP 55081567 6/1980
 JP 55092400 7/1980
 JP 55120770 9/1980
 JP 55138372 10/1980
 JP 55159770 12/1980
 JP 55162953 12/1980
 JP 57005663 1/1981
 JP 56099768 8/1981
 JP 56109568 8/1981
 JP 56121453 9/1981
 JP 56121454 9/1981
 JP 56121455 9/1981
 JP 56160962 12/1981
 JP 57002656 1/1982
 JP 57046998 3/1982
 JP 57075992 5/1982
 JP 57086264 5/1982
 JP 58020170 2/1983
 JP 58028246 2/1983
 JP 58028247 2/1983
 JP 58212759 12/1983
 JP 58212760 12/1983
 JP 59045848 3/1984
 JP 62166861 7/1987
 JP 63173531 7/1988
 JP 1131191 5/1989
 JP H0383558 4/1991
 JP 3262458 11/1991
 JP 6007108 1/1994
 JP 6192283 7/1994
 JP 7143860 6/1995
 JP 7177862 7/1995
 JP 8000214 1/1996
 JP 9107913 4/1997
 JP 2000236842 9/2000
 JP 2002262822 9/2002
 JP 2010516764 5/2010
 KR 20070067199 6/2007
 KR 20080071605 8/2008
 KR 100888694 3/2009
 KR 20090021386 3/2009
 RU 2111969 5/1998
 RU 2123267 12/1998
 RU 2156083 9/2000
 RU 2167544 5/2001
 RU 2198548 2/2003
 WO 2005089483 9/2005
 WO 2006072878 7/2006
 WO 2006072879 7/2006
 WO 2008091547 7/2008
 WO 2009108680 9/2009

(56)

References Cited

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

WO	2010057024	5/2010
WO	2010118218	10/2010
WO	2011059954	5/2011
WO	2011153378	12/2011
WO	2012082493	6/2012
WO	2012082677	6/2012
WO	2013022989	2/2013

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

International Search Report and Written Opinion of PCT/US2011/047499 dated Dec. 22, 2011.

International Search Report and Written Opinion of PCT/US2011/064343.

International Search Report and Written Opinion of PCT/US2012/024585.

International Search Report and Written Opinion of PCT/US2012/024722.

International Search Report and Written Opinion of PCT/US2012/030210.

International Search Report and Written Opinion of PCT/US2012/043294.

International Search Report and Written Opinion of PCT/US2012/051163.

International Search Report and Written Opinion of PCT/US2012/052659.

International Search Report and Written Opinion of PCT/US2012/052665.

International Search Report and Written Opinion of PCT/US2013/030439.

Jaitak, et al., "An Efficient Microwave-assisted Extraction Process of Stevioside and Rebaudioside-A from *Stevia rebaudiana* (Bertoni)", *Phytochem. Anal.* vol. 20 2009, 240-245.

Kennelly, "Sweet and non-sweet constituents of *Stevia rebaudiana*", *Stevia: The genus Stevia*, Taylor & Francis, 2002, 68-85.

Kinghorn, "Overview", *Stevia: The genus Stevia*, Taylor & Francis, 2002, 1-17.

Kitahata, S. et al., "Production of Rubusoside Derivatives by Transgalactosylation of Various β -Galactosidases" *Agric. Biol. Chem.*, vol. 53, No. 11 1989, 2923-2928.

A-Glucosyltransferase Treated Stevia, Japan's Specifications and Standards for Food Additives, VIII edition, 2009, p. 257.

Ahmed, et al., "Use of p-Bromophenacyl Bromide to Enhance Ultraviolet Detection of Water-Soluble Organic Acids (Steviolbioside and Rebaudioside B) in High-Performance Liquid Chromatographic Analysis", *Journal of Chromatography*, vol. 192, 1980, 387-393.

Chang, S.S. et al., "Stability Studies of Stevioside and Rebaudioside A in Carbonated Beverages", *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*, vol. 31, 1983, 409-412.

Chen, et al., "Enrichment and separation of rebaudioside A from stevia glycosides by a novel adsorbent with pyridyl group", *Science in China*, vol. 42, No. 3 1999, 277-282.

Chen, et al., "Selectivity of polymer adsorbent in adsorptive separations of stevia diterpene glycosides", *Science in China*, vol. 41, No. 4 1998, 436-441.

Chen, et al., "Studies on the adsorptive selectivity of the polar resin with carbonyl group on rebaudioside A", *Acta Polymeric Scnica*, No. 4 1999, 398-403.

Crammer, et al., "Sweet glycosides from the Stevia plant", *Chemistry in Britain*, Oct. 1986, 915-916, 918.

Darise et al., "Enzymic Transglucosylation of Rubusoside and the Structure-Sweetness Relationship of Steviol Bisglycosides," *Agric. Biol. Chem.* vol. 48(10), 1984, 2483-2488.

Dubois et al., "Diterpenoid Sweeteners. Synthesis and Sensory Evaluation of Stevioside Analogues with Improved Organoleptic Properties," *J. Med. Chem.* vol. 28, (1985) 93-98.

Fuh, "Purification of steviosides by membrane and ion exchange process", *Journal of Food Science*, vol. 55, No. 5 1990, 1454-1457.

Fukunaga et al., "Enzymic Transglucosylation Products of Stevioside: Separation and Sweetness-evaluation," *Agric. Biol. Chem.* vol. 53(6) (1989) 1603-1607.

Fullas et al., "Separation of natural product sweetening agents using overpressured layer chromatography," *Journal of Chromatography* vol. 464 (1989) 213-219.

Hale, et al., "Amylase of *Bacillus Macerans*", *Cereal Chemistry*, vol. 28, No. 1, Jan. 1951, 49-58.

United Nations' Food and Agriculture Organization/Joint Expert Committee on Food Additives (2010) Steviol Glycosides, Compendium of Food Additive Specifications, FAO JECFA Monographs 10, 17-21.

Van der Maarel et al., "Properties and applications of starch-converting enzymes of the α -amylase family," *Journal of Biotechnology*, vol. 94 (220) 137-155.

Vasquez et al., Stimulation of the Gerbil's Gustatory Receptors by Some Potently Sweet Terpenoids, *J. Agric. Food Chem.*, vol. 41, 1305-1310, 1993.

Yamamoto, K. et al., "Effective Production of Glycosyl-steviosides by α -1, 6 Transglucosylation of Dextrin Dextranase", *Biosci. Biotech. Biochem.* vol. 58, No. 9 1994, 1657-1661.

Yoda, et al. "Supercritical fluid extraction from *Stevia rebaudiana* Bertoni using CO₂ and CO₂+ water: extraction kinetics and identification of extracted components", *Journal of Food Engineering*, vol. 57 2003, 125-134.

Zell, et al. "Investigation of Polymorphism in Aspartame and Neotame Using Solid-State NMR Spectroscopy", *Tetrahedron*, vol. 56, 2000, 6603-6616.

Zhang, et al. "Membrane-based separation scheme for processing sweetener from Stevia leaves", *Food Research International*, vol. 33 2000, 617-620.

International Search Report and Written Opinion of PCT/US2011/047498 dated Dec. 22, 2011.

International Search Report and Written Opinion of PCT/US2010/055960 dated Jan. 25, 2011.

International Search Report and Written Opinion of PCT/US2011/028028.

International Search Report and Written Opinion of PCT/US2011/033734 dated Jul. 12, 2011.

International Search Report and Written Opinion of PCT/US2011/033737.

International Search Report and Written Opinion of PCT/US2011/033912.

International Search Report and Written Opinion of PCT/US2011/035173.

International Search Report and Written Opinion of PCT/US2011/036063 dated Aug. 5, 2011.

Teo, et al. "Validation of green-solvent extraction combined with Chromatographic chemical fingerprint to evaluate quality of *Stevia rebaudiana* Bertoni", *J. Sep. Sci.* vol. 32 2009, 613-622.

Tanaka, O., "Improvement of taste of natural sweeteners," *Pure & Appl. Chem.*, vol. 69, No. 4 1997, 675-683.

Sweet Green Fields, LLC "Notice to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) that the use of Rebaudioside A (Rebaudioside A) derived from *Stevia rebaudiana*, as a Food Ingredient is Generally Recognized as Safe (GRAS)," Jan. 15, 2009, http://www.accessdata.fda.gov/scripts/fen/gras_notices/gm000282.pdf (obtained from the Web on May 8, 2012) entire document esp. p. 22, Table 1.

Starratt, et al. "Rebaudioside F, a diterpene glycoside from *Stevia rebaudiana*", *Phytochemistry*, vol. 59 2002, 367-370.

Shibata et al. "Glucosylation of Steviol and Steviol-Glucosides in Extracts from *Stevia rebaudiana* Bertoni," *Plant Physiol.* vol. 95, (1991) 152-156.

Shi, et al. "Synthesis of bifunctional polymeric adsorbent and its application in purification of Stevia glycosides", *Reactive & functional Polymers*, vol. 50 2002, 107-116.

Sakamoto et al., "Application of ¹³C NMR Spectroscopy to Chemistry of Natural Glycosides: Rebaudioside-C, a New Sweet Diterpene Glycoside of *Stevia rebaudiana*", *Chem. Pharm. Bull.*, vol. 25, 1977, 844-846.

Richman et al., "Functional genomics uncovers three glucosyltransferases involved in the synthesis of the major sweet glycosides of *Stevia rebaudiana*," *The Plant Journal*, vol. 41 (2005) 56-67.

(56)

References Cited

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

Prakash et al., "Development of Next Generation Stevia Sweetener: Rebaudioside M" *Foods* 2014, 3, 162-175, ISSN 2304-8158.

Prakash et al., "Development of rebiana, a natural, non-caloric sweetener," *Jul. 1, 2008, Food and Chemical Toxicology*, vol. 46, Is. 7, Sup. I, p. S75-S82.

Pol, et al., "Comparison of two different solvents employed for pressurised fluid extraction of stevioside from *Stevia rebaudiana*: methanol versus water", *Anal Bioanal Chem* vol. 388 2007, 1847-1857.

Philips, K.C. "Stevia: steps in developing a new sweetener", In T.H. Grenby, Editor, *Developments in Sweeteners-3*, Elsevier 1987, 1-43.

Ohtani et al. "Chapter 7. Methods to improve the taste of the sweet principles of *Stevia rebaudiana*." *The Genus Stevia*, edited by A. Douglas Kinghorn, CRC Press 2001, Taylor and Francis, London and New York, pp. 138-159.

Ohta et al., "Characterization of Novel Steviol Glycosides from Leaves of *Stevia rebaudiana* Morita," *J. Aool. Glycosi.*, vol. 57, 199-209, 2010.

Moraes, et al., "Clarification of *Stevia rebaudiana* (Bert.) Bertoni extract adsorption in modified zeolites", *Acta Scientiarum*, vol. 23, No. 6 2001, 1375-1380.

Montovaneli, et al., "The effect of temperature and flow rate on the clarification of the aqueous *Stevia*-extract in fixed-bed column with zeolites", *Brazilian Journal of Chemical Engineering*, vol. 21, No. 3 2004, 449-458.

Lobov, S. V. et al., "Enzymic Production of Sweet Stevioside Derivatives: Transglucosylation of Glucosidases", *Agric. Biol. Chem.*, vol. 55, No. 12 1991, 2959-2965.

Liu, et al., "Study of stevioside preparation by membrane separation process", *Desalination* vol. 83 1991, 375-382.

Kovylyeva, et al., "Glycosides from *Stevia rebaudiana*", *Chemistry of Natural Compounds*, vol. 43, No. 1 2007, 81-85.

Kohda, et al., "New sweet diterpene glucosides from *Stevia Rebaudiana*", *Phytochemistry*, vol. 15 1976, 981-983.

Kochikyan, et al., "Combined Enzymatic Modification of Stevioside and Rebaudioside A", *Applied Biochemistry and Microbiology*, vol. 42, No. I, 2006, 31-37.

Kobayashi, et al., "Dulcoside A and B, New diterpene glycosides from *Stevia Rebaudiana*", *Phytochemistry*, vol. 16 1977, 1405-1408.

FIG. 1

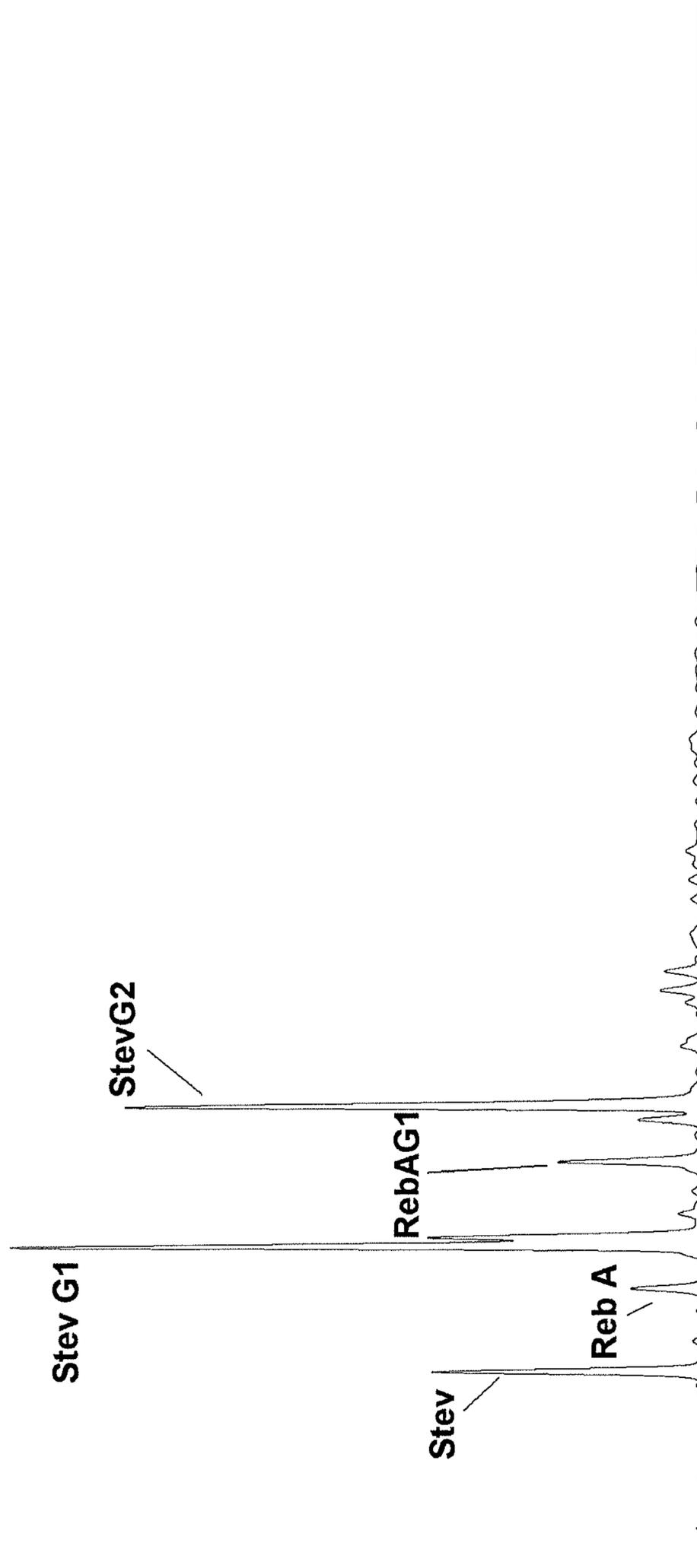


FIG. 2

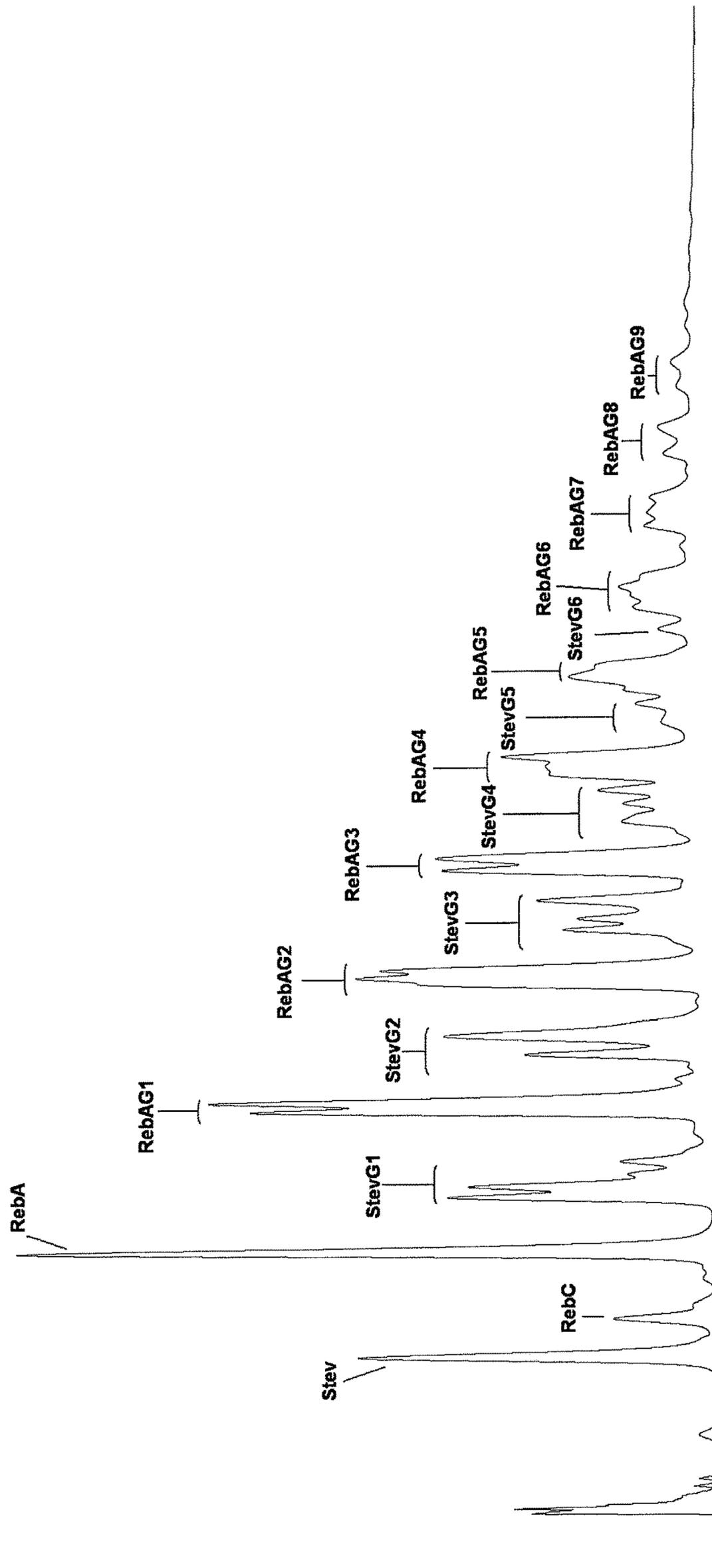
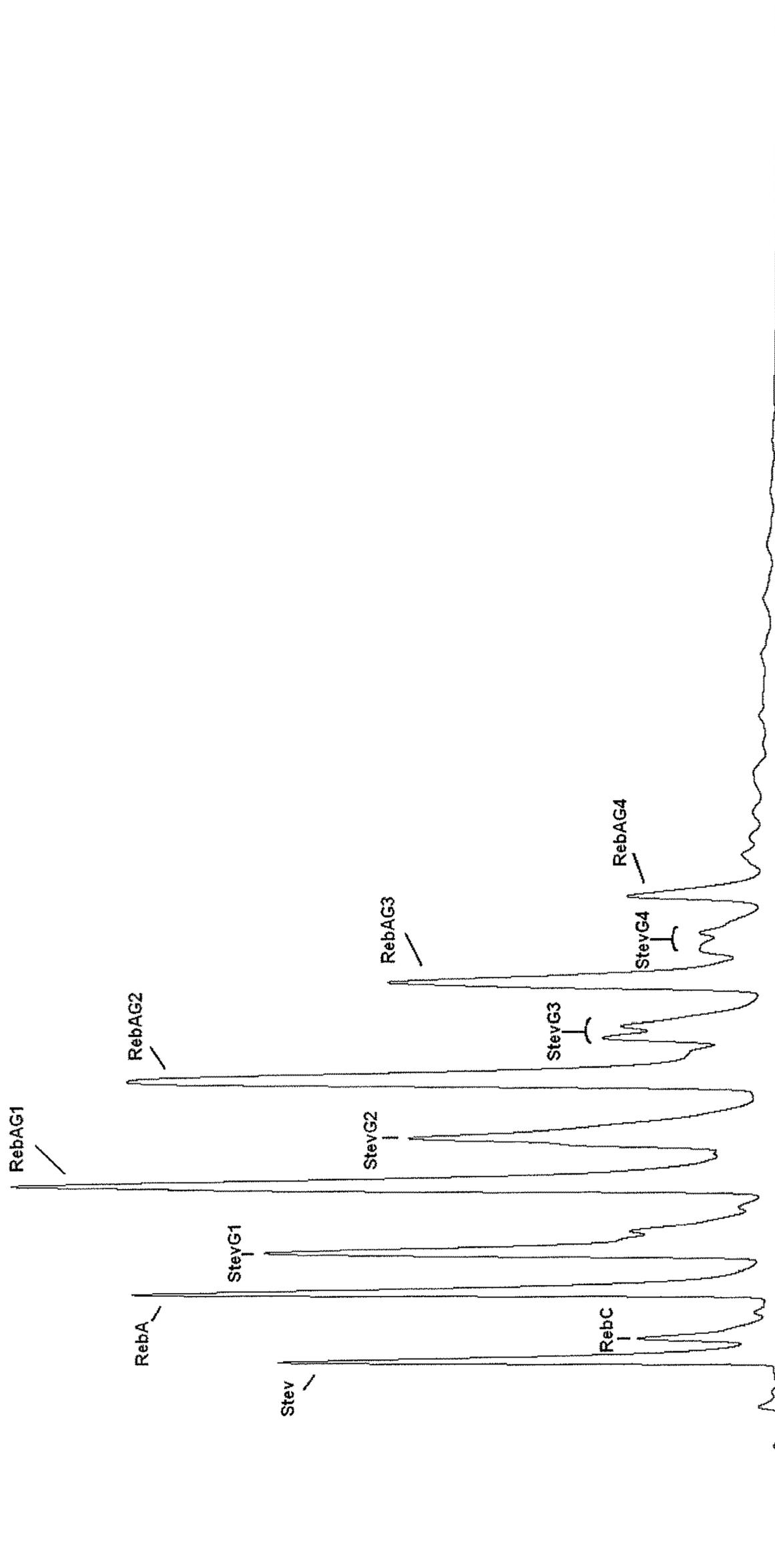


FIG. 3



GLUCOSYL STEVIA COMPOSITION

CROSS REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a Divisional of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 15/646,629, filed Jul. 11, 2017, which is a Continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 14/616,010, filed Feb. 6, 2015, now U.S. Pat. No. 9,706,792 issued Jul. 18, 2017, which is a Continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 14/073,423, filed Nov. 6, 2013, now U.S. Pat. No. 8,993,269 issued Mar. 31, 2015, which is a Continuation of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/567,707, filed Aug. 6, 2012, now U.S. Pat. No. 8,647,844 issued Feb. 11, 2014, which is a Divisional of U.S. patent application Ser. No. 13/029,263, filed Feb. 17, 2011, now U.S. Pat. No. 8,257,948 issued Sep. 4, 2012, the contents of which applications are incorporated herein by reference in their entirety.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

Field of the Invention

The invention relates to a process for producing a highly purified food ingredient from the extract of the *Stevia rebaudiana* Bertoni plant and its use in various food products and beverages.

Description of the Related Art

Nowadays sugar alternatives are receiving increasing attention due to awareness of many diseases in conjunction with consumption of high-sugar foods and beverages. However many artificial sweeteners such as dulcin, sodium cyclamate and saccharin were banned or restricted in some countries due to concerns on their safety. Therefore non-caloric sweeteners of natural origin are becoming increasingly popular. The sweet herb *Stevia rebaudiana* Bertoni, produces a number of diterpene glycosides which feature high intensity sweetness and sensory properties superior to those of many other high potency sweeteners.

The above-mentioned sweet glycosides, have a common aglycon, steviol, and differ by the number and type of carbohydrate residues at the C13 and C19 positions. The leaves of *Stevia* are able to accumulate up to 10-20% (on dry weight basis) steviol glycosides. The major glycosides found in *Stevia* leaves are Rebaudioside A (2-10%), Stevioside (2-10%), and Rebaudioside C (1-2%). Other glycosides such as Rebaudioside B, D, E, and F, Steviolbioside and Rubusoside are found at much lower levels (approx. 0-0.2%).

Two major glycosides—Stevioside and Rebaudioside A, were extensively studied and characterized in terms of their suitability as commercial high intensity sweeteners. Stability studies in carbonated beverages confirmed their heat and pH stability (Chang S. S., Cook, J. M. (1983) Stability studies of stevioside and Rebaudioside A in carbonated beverages. *J. Agric. Food Chem.* 31: 409-412.)

Steviol glycosides differ from each other not only by molecular structure, but also by their taste properties. Usually stevioside is found to be 110-270 times sweeter than sucrose, Rebaudioside A between 150 and 320 times, and Rebaudioside C between 40-60 times sweeter than sucrose. Dulcoside A is 30 times sweeter than sucrose. Rebaudioside A has the least astringent, the least bitter, and the least persistent aftertaste thus possessing the most favorable sensory attributes in major steviol glycosides (Tanaka O. (1987)

Improvement of taste of natural sweeteners. *Pure Appl. Chem.* 69:675-683; Phillips K. C. (1989) *Stevia*: steps in developing a new sweetener. In: Grenby T. H. ed. Developments in sweeteners, vol. 3. Elsevier Applied Science, London. 1-43.)

Methods for the extraction and purification of sweet glycosides from the *Stevia rebaudiana* plant using water or organic solvents are described in, for example, U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,361,697; 4,082,858; 4,892,938; 5,972,120; 5,962,678; 7,838,044 and 7,862,845.

However, even in a highly purified state, steviol glycosides still possess undesirable taste attributes such as bitterness, sweet aftertaste, licorice flavor, etc. One of the main obstacles for the successful commercialization of *stevia* sweeteners are these undesirable taste attributes. It was shown that these flavor notes become more prominent as the concentration of steviol glycosides increases (Prakash I., DuBois G. E., Clos J. F., Wilkens K. L., Fosdick L. E. (2008) Development of rebiana, a natural, non-caloric sweetener. *Food Chem. Toxicol.*, 46, S75-S82.)

On the other hand, replacing large amounts of sugar in the formulations brings up such problems as reduced mouthfeel, incomplete flavor profile etc. Therefore the application of high intensity low calorie sweeteners has to provide solutions to address these problems.

Thus, if a single composition will be able to deliver not only sweetness, but also possess flavor enhancing properties and correct the incomplete mouthfeel associated with the elimination of sucrose from food and beverage formulations, it will certainly be advantageous compared to other high intensity sweeteners known in the art.

Some of these undesirable properties can be reduced or eliminated by subjecting steviol glycosides to the reaction of intermolecular transglycosylation, when new carbohydrate residues are attached to initial molecule at C13 and C19 positions. Depending on the number of carbohydrate residues in these positions the quality and potency of the compounds taste will vary.

Pullulanase, isomaltase (Lobov S. V., Jasai R., Ohtani K., Tanaka O. Yamasaki K. (1991) Enzymatic production of sweet stevioside derivatives: transglycosylation by glucosidases. *Agric. Biol. Chem.* 55: 2959-2965), β -galactosidase (Kitahata S., Ishikawa S., Miyata T., Tanaka O. (1989) Production of rubusoside derivatives by transglycosylation of various β -galactosidase. *Agric. Biol. Chem.* 53: 2923-2928), and dextran saccharase (Yamamoto K., Yoshikawa K., Okada S. (1994) Effective production of glucosyl-stevioside by α -1,6-transglucosylation of dextran dextranase. *Biosci. Biotech. Biochem.* 58: 1657-1661) have been used as transglycosylating enzymes, together with pullulan, maltose, lactose, and partially hydrolyzed starch, respectively, as donors of glycosidic residues.

The transglucosylation of steviol glycosides was also performed by action of cyclodextrin glucanotransferases (CGTase) produced by *Bacillus stearothermophilus* (U.S. Pat. Nos. 4,219,571, and 7,807,206) as a result α -1,4-glucosyl derivatives were formed with degree of polymerization up to 10.

The treatment of transglucosylated stevioside with β -amylase resulted in a product consisting of mono- or di- α -1,4-glucosyl derivatives (Tanaka, 1987).

It was shown that the taste profile and sweetness power of glucosyl derivatives are largely dependent on number of additional glucosyl derivatives, i.e. the degree of polymerization of the α -1,4-glucosyl chain. The increase in number of α -1,4-glucosyl residues improved the taste quality but at the same time reduced the sweetness level (Tanaka, 1987).

3

It is noted also that many glucosyl *stevia* products contain up to 20% residual dextrans which do not possess significant functional properties and reduce the content of steviol glycosides in the product.

Therefore it is necessary to develop high purity products with optimal α -1,4-glucosyl chain length which will deliver the best combination of sweetness potency and flavor profile.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is aimed to overcome the disadvantages of existing *Stevia* sweeteners. The invention describes a process for producing a high purity food ingredient from the extract of the *Stevia rebaudiana* Bertoni plant and use thereof in various food products and beverages as a sweetness and flavor modifier.

The invention, in part, pertains to an ingredient comprising glucosylated derivatives of steviol glycosides of *Stevia rebaudiana* Bertoni plant. The steviol glycosides are selected from the group consisting of stevioside, Rebaudioside A, Rebaudioside B, Rebaudioside C, Rebaudioside D, Rebaudioside E, Rebaudioside F, dulcoside A, steviolbioside, rubusoside, as well as other steviol glycosides found in *Stevia rebaudiana* Bertoni plant and mixtures thereof.

The invention, in part, pertains to a process for producing an ingredient containing glucosylated forms of stevioside, Rebaudioside A, Rebaudioside B, Rebaudioside C, Rebaudioside D, Rebaudioside E, Rebaudioside F, dulcoside A, steviolbioside, rubusoside, as well as other steviol glycosides found in *Stevia rebaudiana* Bertoni plant. The process can be an enzymatic transglucosylating process using CGTases produced by cultures of *Bacillus stearothermophilus*. The process may include the step of shortening glucosyl chains by β -amylase. The process can also have the steps of decolorizing, desalting and removing maltooligosaccharides. The decolorizing can be performed using activated carbon. The desalting can be performed by passing through ion exchange resins and/or membrane filters. Removing the maltooligosaccharides can be performed by passing through macroporous polymeric resin.

In the invention, *Stevia* extract commercialized by PureCircle (JiangXi) Co., Ltd. (China), containing stevioside (28-30%), Rebaudioside A (50-55%), Rebaudioside C (9-12%), Rebaudioside F (1-3%) and other glycosides amounting to total steviol glycosides' content of at least 95%, was used as a starting material. Alternatively *stevia* extracts with different ratio of steviol glycosides as well as highly purified steviol glycosides such as Rebaudioside A, stevioside, Rebaudioside D, rubusoside etc, may be used as starting materials.

The starting material was subjected to the enzymatic transglucosylation by action of cyclodextrin glycosyltransferase (CGTase) in the presence of starch as a glucose donor. As a result α -1,4-glucosyl derivatives were formed with degree of polymerization up to 10. Then the formed derivatives were subjected to treatment with β -amylase to produce α -1,4-glucosyl derivatives possessing a specific degree of polymerization.

The oligosaccharides from obtained reaction mixture were removed by Amberlite XAD7 HP resin, and then decolorized, deionized, concentrated and spray dried.

The obtained products were applied in various foods and beverages as sweeteners, sweetener enhancers and flavor modifiers, including ice cream, cookies, bread, fruit juices, milk products, baked goods and confectionary products.

4

It is to be understood that both the foregoing general description and the following detailed description are exemplary and explanatory and are intended to provide further explanation of the invention as claimed.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The accompanying drawings are included to provide a further understanding of the invention. The drawings illustrate embodiments of the invention and together with the description serve to explain the principles of the embodiments of the invention.

FIG. 1 shows a high-performance liquid chromatographic (HPLC) chart of commercial β -amylase treated product containing only mono- and di- α -1,4-glucosyl-derivatives of steviol glycosides;

FIG. 2 shows a high-performance liquid chromatographic chromatogram of purified transglucosylated *Stevia* extract without β -amylase treatment containing long-chain α -1,4-glucosyl-derivatives with up to nine α -1,4-glucosyl residues;

FIG. 3 shows a high-performance liquid chromatographic chromatogram of purified transglucosylated *Stevia* extract after β -amylase treatment with short-chain (containing four or less α -1,4-glucosyl residues) derivatives of stevioside and Rebaudioside A.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

Advantages of the present invention will become more apparent from the detailed description given hereinafter. However, it should be understood that the detailed description and specific examples, while indicating preferred embodiments of the invention, are given by way of illustration only, since various changes and modifications within the spirit and scope of the invention will become apparent to those skilled in the art from this detailed description.

Stevia extract commercialized by PureCircle (JiangXi) Co., Ltd. (China), containing stevioside (28-30%), Rebaudioside A (50-55%), Rebaudioside C (9-12%), Rebaudioside F (1-3%) and other glycosides (hereinafter collectively, "steviol glycosides") amounting to total steviol glycosides content of at least 95%, was used as a starting material. Alternatively *stevia* extracts with different ratio of steviol glycosides as well as highly purified steviol glycosides such as Rebaudioside A, stevioside, Rebaudioside D, rubusoside etc, may be used as starting materials.

The HPLC analysis of the raw materials and products was performed on Agilent Technologies 1200 Series (USA) liquid chromatograph, equipped with Zorbax-NH₂ (4.6×250 mm) column. The mobile phase was acetonitrile-water gradient from 80:20, v/v (0-2 min) to 50:50, v/v (2-70 min). A diode array detector set at 210 nm was used as the detector.

The transglucosylation was accomplished by cyclomalto-dextrin glucanotransferases (CGTases; EC 2.4.1.19) produced by *Bacillus stearothermophilus* St-88 (PureCircle Sdn Bhd Collection of Industrial Microorganisms—Malaysia). However, any other CGTase or enzyme possessing intermolecular transglucosylation activity may be applied as well. The enzyme can be in a form of cell-free culture broth, concentrated liquid cell-free culture broth, spray dried or freeze dried cell-free culture broth, or high purity protein. Free and immobilized enzyme preparations can be used.

The activity of CGTase preparations was determined according to the procedure described in Hale W. S., Rawlins L. C. (1951) Amylase of *Bacillus macerans*. Cereal Chem. 28, 49-58.

Starches of different origin may be used as donors of glucosyl units such as, derived from wheat, corn, potato, tapioca, and sago.

Starch was subjected to partial hydrolysis (liquefaction) prior to the transglycosylation reaction. The dextrose equivalent of the partially hydrolyzed starch can be in the range of about 10-25, preferably about 12-16. Any enzyme capable of starch hydrolysis may be used for liquefaction, such as α -amylases, β -amylases etc. In one embodiment, CGTase and α -amylase mixtures as liquefying enzymes are preferred.

α -Amylase activity is expressed in Kilo Novo α -amylase Units (KNU). One KNU is the amount of α -amylase which, under standard conditions (pH 7.1; 37° C.), dextrinizes 5.26 g starch dry substance per hour.

The liquefaction mixture contains about 0.001-0.2 KNU, preferably about 0.05-0.1 KNU of α -amylase per one unit of CGTase.

The use of α -amylase in liquefaction allows achieving higher throughputs in further activated carbon filtration. When the CGTase is used as the only liquefying enzyme the filtration rate is approximately 10-15 L/hr per 1 m² of filter surface. In case of liquefaction enzyme mixture (comprising α -amylase and CGTase) the filtration rate is twice as fast—approximately 20-30 L/hr per 1 m² of filter surface.

The ratio of starch and CGTase in the liquefaction mixture is about 0.1-0.5 units per one gram of starch, preferably about 0.2-0.4 units per gram.

The concentration of starch in liquefaction mixture is about 15-40% (wt/wt), preferably about 20-30%.

The liquefaction is conducted at about 70-90° C. during about 0.5-5 hours, preferably about 1-2 hours.

After liquefaction, the reaction mixture is subjected to thermal inactivation of α -amylase at low pH conditions. The preferred pH range for inactivation is about pH 2.5 to pH 3.0 and preferred temperature is about 95-105° C. The duration of thermal inactivation is about 5-10 minutes.

After the inactivation, the pH of the reaction mixture is adjusted to about pH 5.5-6.5 and the steviol glycosides are added to the mixture and dissolved. The preferred ratio of steviol glycosides to starch (kg of steviol glycosides per 1 kg of starch) is about 0.5-1.5, preferably about 0.8-1.2.

A second portion of CGTase preparation is added and the transglycosylation reaction is conducted at about 65° C. for about 24-48 hours. The amount of the second portion of CGTase is about 0.2-4 units of CGTase per gram of solids, preferably about 0.5-1.2 units per gram of solids.

Upon completion of transglycosylation reaction, about 30-50 units per gram of solids of β -amylase was added and the reaction was continued for about 12-16 hours at about 35-55° C., preferably about 45° C. Soybean β -amylase was used in this stage. However β -amylases derived from any other source including barley, bacterial, fungal β -amylases and others may be used as well.

β -Amylase activity unit (1 AUN) is defined as the activity which liberates 100 μ g of reducing sugar (expressed by

dextrose equivalent) per minute under the following conditions: 1 mL of enzyme solution is mixed with 5 mL of 1.2% starch solution (pH 5.5, M/20 Acetate Buffer) and kept for 20 min at 40° C.

The reaction was stopped by heating at about 95° C. for about 15 minutes to inactivate the enzymes, and the solution was treated with activated carbon, to obtain decolorized reaction mixture. The amount of activated carbon was about 0.02-0.4 grams per gram of solids, preferably about 0.05-0.2 grams per gram of solids.

The decolorized reaction mixture was desalted by passing through ion exchange resins, such as Amberlite FPC23 (H⁺ type) and Amberlite FPA51 (OH⁻ type). Other appropriate decolorizing and desalting methods, such as membrane filtration, or other methods known in the art can be used.

The desalted reaction mixture was further concentrated by vacuum evaporator and dried by means of a spray dryer. Other appropriate concentrating and drying methods, such as membrane filtration, freeze drying, or other methods known to art can be used. The resulting product contains non-modified glycosides, short-chain (containing four or less α -1,4-glucosyl residues) derivatives and a mixture of maltooligosaccharides (Sample 1).

In order to prepare a product with higher content of total sweet glycosides (the sum of glycosylated and non-glycosylated glycosides), the maltooligosaccharides were removed using Amberlite XAD7 HP prior to the desalting treatment. The steviol glycosides and their glucosylated derivatives were adsorbed on the resin and subsequently eluted by aqueous ethanol. The resulted aqueous ethanol eluate, containing glucosyl steviol glycosides, was subsequently decolorized and desalted as described above and the glycosides solution, after the evaporation of eluting solvent, was powdered by spray drying. The resulting product contains non-modified glycosides, and short-chain (containing four or less α -1,4-glucosyl residues) derivatives (Sample 2).

The embodiments of the invention exemplified by Samples 1 and 2 are free or substantially free of higher glucosylated derivatives having more than 4 glucosyl residues. In accordance with this invention, the highly purified glucosyl *stevia* composition preferably comprises greater than about 25% by weight di-, tri- and tetraglucosyl Rebaudioside A, and greater than about 9% by weight tri- and tetraglucosyl steviosides.

Using a similar process as for sample 2, with exclusion of the β -amylase treatment stage, a product containing non-modified glycosides and long chain α -1,4-glucosyl-derivatives (with up to nine α -1,4-glucosyl residues) was prepared (Sample 3).

As a control, a commercial β -amylase treated product containing non-modified glycosides, and short-chain (containing two or less α -1,4-glucosyl residues) derivatives was used (Sample 4). The composition of the samples is summarized in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Compounds	Composition of glucosyl steviol glycosides samples			
	Content, %			
	Sample 1	Sample 2	Sample 3	Sample 4
Stevioside	2.5	3.0	3.1	9.5
Rebaudioside C	0.9	1.0	1.0	0.4
Rebaudioside A	5.2	6.1	6.0	2.8

TABLE 1-continued

Composition of glucosyl steviol glycosides samples				
Compounds	Content, %			
	Sample 1	Sample 2	Sample 3	Sample 4
Monoglucosyl-stevioside (StevG1)	11.0	13.2	7.4	34.9
Monoglucosyl-Rebaudioside A (RebAG1)	14.6	17.5	11.1	6.3
Diglucosyl-stevioside (StevG2)	10.4	12.4	8.4	26.4
Diglucosyl-Rebaudioside A (RebAG2)	15.6	18.6	9.6	—
Triglucosyl-stevioside (StevG3)	5.8	7.0	6.3	—
Triglucosyl-Rebaudioside A (RebAG3)	7.9	9.5	7.7	—
Tetraglucosyl-stevioside (StevG4)	3.7	4.4	5.6	—
Tetraglucosyl-Rebaudioside A (RebAG4)	2.9	3.4	6.1	—
Higher glucosylated derivatives	—	—	22.7	—
Total content of glycosides	80.5	96.1	95.0	80.3

The sensory assessment of samples was carried using aqueous solutions, with 20 panelists. Based on overall acceptance the most desirable and most undesirable samples were chosen. The results are shown in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Sensory assessment of samples in water system				
Judgment	Sample 1	Sample 2	Sample 3	Sample 4
Most desirable	5	11	1	2
Most undesirable	1	0	7	12
Sweetness power	150	160	120	150
Comments	Sweet, light, soft, round, pleasant, almost similar to sucrose, no lingering aftertaste, sweetness onset is rapid	Sweet, light, soft, round, pleasant, similar to sucrose, no lingering aftertaste, sweetness onset is rapid	Sweet, slightly bitter, astringent, no lingering aftertaste, sweetness onset is moderate	Sweet, slightly bitter, astringent, slight lingering aftertaste, sweetness onset is slow

As apparent from the results in Table 2, the sweetness quality of the Samples 1 and 2 was rated as most superior. Overall the samples with short-chain (containing four or less α -1,4-glucosyl residues) derivatives (No 1, and No. 2) possessed better taste profiles compared to samples with long-chain glucosyl derivatives (No. 3) and two or less α -1,4-glucosyl residues short-chain derivatives (No. 4).

Samples 1 and 2 show comparable sweetness power (150-160 times sweeter compared to a 5% sucrose solution) with control Sample 4 (150 times); however their flavor profile was clearly superior to the control sample.

The compositions can be used as sweetness enhancers, flavor enhancers and sweeteners in various food and beverage products. Non-limiting examples of food and beverage products include carbonated soft drinks, ready to drink beverages, energy drinks, isotonic drinks, low-calorie drinks, zero-calorie drinks, sports drinks, teas, fruit and vegetable juices, juice drinks, dairy drinks, yoghurt drinks, alcohol beverages, powdered beverages, bakery products, cookies, biscuits, baking mixes, cereals, confectioneries, candies, toffees, chewing gum, dairy products, flavored milk, yoghurts, flavored yoghurts, cultured milk, soy sauce and other soy base products, salad dressings, mayonnaise, vinegar, frozen-desserts, meat products, fish-meat products, bottled and canned foods, tabletop sweeteners, fruits and vegetables.

Additionally the compositions can be used in drug or pharmaceutical preparations and cosmetics, including but not limited to toothpaste, mouthwash, cough syrup, chewable tablets, lozenges, vitamin preparations, and the like.

40

The compositions can be used “as-is” or in combination with other sweeteners, flavors and food ingredients.

Non-limiting examples of sweeteners include steviol glycosides, stevioside, Rebaudioside A, Rebaudioside B, Rebaudioside C, Rebaudioside D, Rebaudioside E, Rebaudioside F, dulcoside A, steviolbioside, rubusoside, as well as other steviol glycosides found in *Stevia rebaudiana* Bertoni plant and mixtures thereof, *stevia* extract, Luo Han Guo extract, mogrosides, high-fructose corn syrup, corn syrup, invert sugar, fructooligosaccharides, inulin, inulooligosaccharides, coupling sugar, maltooligosaccharides, maltodextrins, corn syrup solids, glucose, maltose, sucrose, lactose, aspartame, saccharin, sucralose, sugar alcohols.

Non-limiting examples of flavors include lemon, orange, fruity, banana, grape, pear, pineapple, bitter almond, cola, cinnamon, sugar, cotton candy, vanilla flavors.

Non-limiting examples of other food ingredients include flavors, acidulants, organic and amino acids, coloring agents, bulking agents, modified starches, gums, texturizers, preservatives, antioxidants, emulsifiers, stabilisers, thickeners, gelling agents.

The following examples illustrate various embodiments of the invention. It will be understood that the invention is not limited to the materials, proportions, conditions and procedures set forth in the examples, which are only illustrative.

EXAMPLE 1

Preparation of CGTase

A strain of *Bacillus stearothermophilus* St-88 was inoculated in 2,000 liters of sterilized culture medium containing 1.0% starch, 0.25% corn extract, 0.5% $(\text{NH}_4)_2\text{SO}_4$, and 0.2% CaCO_3 (pH 7.0-7.5) at 56° C. for 24 hrs with continuous aeration (2,000 L/min) and agitation (150 rpm). The obtained culture broth was filtered using Kerasep 0.1 μm ceramic membrane (Novasep, France) to separate the cells. The cell-free permeate was further concentrated 2-fold on Persep 10 kDa ultrafilters (Orelis, France). The activity of the enzyme was determined according to Hale, Rawlins (1951). A crude enzyme preparation with activity of about 2 unit/mL was obtained.

EXAMPLE 2

Preparation of Short-Chain Glucosyl *Stevia* Composition

100 g of tapioca starch was suspended in 300 mL of water (pH 6.5). 2 KNU of α -amylase (Termamyl Classic, Novozymes, Denmark) and 30 units of CGTase obtained according to EXAMPLE 1 were added, and the liquefaction of starch was carried out at 80° C. for about one hour to dextrose equivalent about 15. The pH of reaction mixture was adjusted to pH 2.8 by hydrochloric acid and the mixture was boiled at 100° C. during 5 minutes to inactivate the enzymes. After cooling to 65° C., the pH was adjusted to pH 6.0 with sodium hydroxide solution. 100 g *stevia* extract produced by PureCircle (JiangXi) Co., Ltd. (China), containing stevioside 29.2%, Rebaudioside A 54.3%, Rebaudioside C 9.0%, Rebaudioside F (1.7%) and other glycosides amounting to total steviol glycosides content of about 96.4% was added to liquefied starch and stirred until a homogeneous solution was obtained. 200 units of CGTase was added to the solution and the mixture was held at a temperature of 65° C. for 24 hours under continuous agitation. Then the temperature was reduced to 45° C., and 8,000 units soybean β -amylase (#1500S, Nagase Chemtex Corp., Japan) was added to reaction mixture. The reaction was continued for another 12 hours. The obtained reaction mixture was heated at 95° C. for 15 minutes to inactivate the enzymes. 20 grams of activated carbon was added and the mixture was heated to 75° C. and held for 30 minutes. The mixture was filtered and the filtrate was diluted with water to 5% solids content and passed through columns packed with Amberlite FPC23 (H^+) and Amberlite FPA51 (OH^-) ion exchange resins. The desalted solution was concentrated at 60° C. under vacuum, and dried into a powder form using laboratory spray dryer. 196 grams of product was obtained (Sample 1).

EXAMPLE 3

Preparation of Highly Purified Short-Chain Glucosyl *Stevia* Composition

100 g of tapioca starch was suspended in 300 mL of water (pH 6.5). 2 KNU of α -amylase (Termamyl Classic, Novozymes, Denmark) and 30 units of CGTase obtained according to EXAMPLE 1 were added, and the liquefaction of starch was carried out at 80° C. for about one hour to dextrose equivalent about 15. The pH of reaction mixture was adjusted to pH 2.8 by hydrochloric acid and the mixture was boiled at 100° C. during 5 minutes to inactivate the enzymes. After cooling to 65° C., the pH was adjusted to pH 6.0 with sodium hydroxide solution. 100 g *stevia* extract produced by PureCircle (JiangXi) Co., Ltd. (China), con-

taining stevioside 29.2%, Rebaudioside A 54.3%, Rebaudioside C 9.0%, Rebaudioside F (1.7%) and other glycosides amounting to total steviol glycosides content of about 96.4% was added to liquefied starch and stirred until a homogeneous solution was obtained. 200 units of CGTase was added to the solution and the mixture was held at a temperature of 65° C. for 24 hours under continuous agitation. Then the temperature was reduced to 45° C., and 8,000 units soybean β -amylase (#1500S, Nagase Chemtex Corp., Japan) was added to reaction mixture. The reaction was continued for another 12 hours. The obtained reaction mixture was heated at 95° C. for 15 minutes to inactivate the enzymes. 20 grams of activated carbon was added and the mixture was heated to 75° C. and held for 30 minutes. The mixture was filtered and the filtrate was diluted with water to 5% solids content and passed through columns each packed with 4000 mL Amberlite XAD 7HP macroporous adsorbent resin. The columns were washed with 5 volumes of water and 2 volumes of 20% (v/v) ethanol. The adsorbed glycosides were eluted with 50% ethanol. Obtained eluate was passed through columns packed with Amberlite FPC23 (H^+) and Amberlite FPA51 (OH^-) ion exchange resins. The ethanol was evaporated and the desalted and decolorized water solution was concentrated at 60° C. under vacuum, then dried into a powder form using laboratory spray dryer. 151 grams of product was obtained (Sample 2).

EXAMPLE 4

Preparation of Highly Purified Long-Chain Glucosyl *Stevia* Composition

100 g of tapioca starch was suspended in 300 mL of water (pH 6.5). 2 KNU of α -amylase (Termamyl Classic, Novozymes, Denmark) and 30 units of CGTase obtained according to EXAMPLE 1 were added, and the liquefaction of starch was carried out at 80° C. for about one hour to dextrose equivalent about 15. The pH of reaction mixture was adjusted to pH 2.8 by hydrochloric acid and the mixture was boiled at 100° C. during 5 minutes to inactivate the enzymes. After cooling to 65° C., the pH was adjusted to pH 6.0 with sodium hydroxide solution. 100 g *stevia* extract produced by PureCircle (JiangXi) Co., Ltd. (China), containing stevioside 29.2%, Rebaudioside A 54.3%, Rebaudioside C 9.0%, Rebaudioside F (1.7%) and other glycosides amounting to total steviol glycosides content of about 96.4% was added to liquefied starch and stirred until a homogeneous solution was obtained. 200 units of CGTase was added to the solution and the mixture was held at a temperature of 65° C. for 24 hours under continuous agitation. The obtained reaction mixture was heated at 95° C. for 15 minutes to inactivate the enzyme. 20 grams of activated carbon was added and the mixture was heated to 75° C. and held during 30 min. The mixture was filtered and the filtrate was diluted with water to 5% solids content and passed through columns each packed with 4000 mL Amberlite XAD 7HP macroporous adsorbent resin. The columns were washed with 5 volumes of water and 2 volumes of 20% (v/v) ethanol. The adsorbed glycosides were eluted with 50% ethanol. Obtained eluate was passed through columns packed with Amberlite FPC23 (H^+) and Amberlite FPA51 (OH^-) ion exchange resins. The ethanol was evaporated and the desalted and decolorized water solution was concentrated at 60° C. under vacuum, then dried into a powder form using laboratory spray dryer. 166 grams of product was obtained (Sample 3).

11

EXAMPLE 5

Low-Calorie Orange Juice Drink

Orange concentrate (35%), citric acid (0.35%), ascorbic acid (0.05%), orange red color (0.01%), orange flavor (0.20%), Rebaudioside A (0.003%) and different glucosyl *stevia* compositions (0.03%) were blended and dissolved completely in water (up to 100%) and pasteurized. Glucosyl *stevia* compositions were represented by Samples 1, 2, and 3, obtained according to EXAMPLES 2, 3, and 4, respectively; and Sample 4 was a commercial β -amylase treated product (containing only mono- and di- α -1,4-glucosyl-derivatives of steviol glycosides).

The sensory evaluations of the samples are summarized in Table 3. The data show that the best results can be obtained by using the high purity short-chain glucosyl *stevia* compositions (containing four or less α -1,4-glucosyl residues) derivatives (Samples 1 and 2). Particularly the drinks pre-

12

Ingredients	Quantity, %
Sucrose	5.5
Cola flavor	0.340
ortho-Phosphoric acid	0.100
Sodium citrate	0.310
Sodium benzoate	0.018
Citric acid	0.018
Rebaudioside A	0.003
Glucosyl <i>stevia</i> composition	0.05
Carbonated water	to 100

The sensory properties were evaluated by 20 panelists. The results are summarized in Table 4.

TABLE 4

Evaluation of low-calorie carbonated beverage samples				
Taste attribute	Number of panelists detected the attribute			
	Sample No. 1	Sample No. 2	Sample No. 3	Sample No. 4
Bitter taste	0	0	2	20
Astringent taste	1	0	3	20
Aftertaste	1	0	2	20
	Comments			
Quality of sweet taste	Clean (19 of 20)	Clean (20 of 20)	Clean (17 of 20)	Bitter aftertaste (5 of 20)
Overall evaluation	Satisfactory (18 of 20)	Satisfactory (20 of 20)	Satisfactory (15 of 20)	Satisfactory (3 of 20)

pared with Samples 1 and 2 exhibited a rounded and complete flavor profile and mouthfeel.

TABLE 3

Evaluation of orange juice drink samples			
Sample	Flavor	Comments	
		Aftertaste	Mouthfeel
No. 1	High quality sweetness, pleasant taste similar to sucrose, rounded and balanced flavor	Clean, almost no bitterness, no aftertaste	Full
No. 2	High quality sweetness, pleasant taste similar to sucrose, rounded and balanced flavor	Clean, no bitterness and no aftertaste	Full
No. 3	High quality sweetness, pleasant taste almost similar to sucrose, rounded and balanced flavor	Clean, almost no bitterness, no aftertaste	Almost acceptable
No. 4	Sweet, licorice notes	Slight bitterness and aftertaste	Not acceptable

The same method can be used to prepare juices and juice drinks from other fruits, such as apples, lemons, apricots, cherries, pineapples, mangoes, etc.

EXAMPLE 6

Low-Calorie Carbonated Beverage

A carbonated beverage according to formula presented below was prepared.

The above results show that the beverages prepared using Samples 1 and 2 possessed the best organoleptic characteristics.

EXAMPLE 7

Diet Cookies

Flour (50.0%), margarine (30.0%) fructose (10.0%), maltitol (8.0%), whole milk (1.0%), salt (0.2%), baking powder (0.15%), vanillin (0.1%) and different glucosyl *stevia* compositions (0.03%) were kneaded well in dough-mixing machine. The obtained dough was molded and baked in oven at 200° C. for 15 minutes. Glucosyl *stevia* compositions were by represented by Samples 1, 2, and 3, obtained according to EXAMPLES 2, 3, and 4, respectively; with Sample 4 being a commercial β -amylase treated product (containing only mono- and di- α -1,4-glucosyl-derivatives of steviol glycosides).

The sensory properties were evaluated by 20 panelists. The best results were obtained in samples prepared by high purity short-chain glucosyl *stevia* compositions (containing four or less α -1,4-glucosyl residues) derivatives (Samples 1 and 2). The panelists noted rounded and complete flavor profile and mouthfeel in cookies prepared with Samples 1 and 2.

EXAMPLE 8

Yoghurt

Different glucosyl *stevia* compositions (0.03%) and sucrose (4%) were dissolved in low fat milk. Glucosyl *stevia*

13

compositions were by represented by Samples 1, 2, and 3, obtained according to EXAMPLES 2, 3, and 4, respectively; with Sample 4 being a commercial β -amylase treated product (containing only mono- and di- α -1,4-glucosyl-derivatives of steviol glycosides). After pasteurizing at 82° C. for 20 minutes, the milk was cooled to 37° C. A starter culture (3%) was added and the mixture was incubated at 37° C. for 6 hours then at 5° C. for 12 hours.

The sensory properties were evaluated by 20 panelists. The best results were obtained in samples prepared by high purity short-chain glucosyl *stevia* compositions (containing four or less α -1,4-glucosyl residues) derivatives (Samples 1 and 2). The panelists noted rounded and complete flavor profile and mouthfeel in samples prepared with Samples 1 and 2.

It is to be understood that the foregoing descriptions and specific embodiments shown herein are merely illustrative of the best mode of the invention and the principles thereof, and that modifications and additions may be easily made by those skilled in the art without departing for the spirit and scope of the invention, which is therefore understood to be limited only by the scope of the appended claims.

We claim:

1. A method of making a flavor modifier comprising a glucosyl *stevia* composition, said flavor modifier made by a process comprising the steps of:

14

adding starch into water to form a starch suspension;
adding a first hydrolyzing enzyme comprising a mixture of α -amylase and CGTase into the starch suspension and incubating for about 0.5 to 5 hours at about 70-90° C., resulting in a liquefied starch suspension;

inactivating the α -amylase by low pH heat treatment;
adding steviol glycosides into the liquefied starch suspension, resulting in a reaction mixture; and
adding a transglucosylation enzyme into the reaction mixture and incubating for about 24-48 hours at about 65° C. to transglucosylate the steviol glycosides, resulting in a glucosyl *stevia* composition;

wherein the flavor modifier comprises greater than about 34% by weight di-, tri- and tetraglucosyl steviol glycosides, and further comprises unmodified steviol glycosides and a mixture of maltooligosaccharides.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein the transglucosylation step is carried out to provide greater than about 25% by weight di-, tri- and tetraglucosyl Rebaudioside A and greater than about 9% tri- and tetraglucosyl steviosides in the glucosyl *stevia* composition.

3. The method of claim 1, wherein the transglucosylation step is carried out to provide up to 20% residual dextrans in the flavor modifier.

* * * * *